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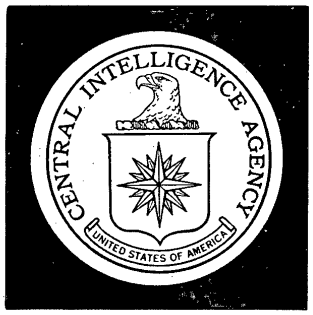

The President's Daily Brief

11 June 1969

19

~~*Top Secret*~~

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I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

VIETNAM

The Vietnamese Communists have staked out a formal claim to a share of political power in South Vietnam by setting up a provisional regime as a rival to the Saigon government. The step, announced yesterday by the Viet Cong's Liberation Radio, was billed as the product of consultations between the Liberation Front and the other major Communist front organization, the Alliance.

Front chairman Nguyen Huu Tho said the "Provisional Revolutionary Government" would "regulate all our internal and foreign affairs." He also indicated that it is intended to mobilize support behind the standard list of Communist objectives, including the overthrow of the Saigon government. He described it as a "resistance government" for fighting the war and for applying "democracy" to the population.

Since the 1968 Tet offensive the Communists have been laying the groundwork for such a body by establishing, or claiming to establish, "revolutionary administrations" from the hamlet up through the province and region administrative levels. From time to time there have been strong suggestions that they were aiming ultimately for a national regime.

One major drawback to effective implementation of such a scheme has been the lack of prominent South Vietnamese personalities who would lend their names to it. As announced

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by the Liberation Radio, the personnel in the cabinet and the advisory council of the new "government" appear to be drawn largely from familiar figures in the Front and the Alliance. Some more prestigious leadership would seem necessary if the Communists are to get more support from South Vietnamese who are unwilling to back the Thieu government.

The Liberation Radio announced today that henceforth the Liberation Front's delegation in Paris would be referred to as "the delegation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam."

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MIDDLE EAST

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Gromyko has gone to Cairo. We assume he is checking out Moscow's reply to the US proposals passed to Ambassador Dobrynin last month. The Soviets said last week that they would have their reply ready in the "next few days." On his last visit to Egypt, Gromyko won Egyptian approval of the "peace plan" the Soviets surfaced last December.

EUROPE

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

There is nothing of significance to report.

II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

COMMUNIST CHINA

Peking has issued a strong warning to recalcitrant radical elements to fall in line. A joint editorial of the three major party and military journals, broadcast on 8 June by Peking Radio, strongly reaffirmed the current drive to restore political unity after the upheavals of the Cultural Revolution. Most pointedly, the editorial insisted that re-educated and "liberated" cadres--even some who earlier had opposed Mao himself--must be restored to positions of real authority.

Many of these men, purged by Red Guard action, are experienced managers and administrators. The editorial's call, therefore, suggests that those elements in China's leadership with the greatest interest in order and national development--primarily the central and regional military leaders, together with senior government administrators--are now strong enough to call the tune.

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Peking today lodged another protest with the Soviets alleging that further incidents occurred last evening in the West China border area north of the Dzungarian Gate.

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